

Standing Forest and Forestry Expert Group

2023/0410(COD) - 22/11/2023 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to amend Council Decision 89/367/EEC setting up a Standing Forestry Committee.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: Council Decision 89/367/EEC set up a Standing Forestry Committee in order to ensure closer and more constant cooperation in the forestry sector between the Member States and the Commission, and thereby support forestry measures initiated under the European Economic Community's agricultural structure and rural development policy. The Standing Forestry Committee is composed of representatives of the Member States and is chaired by a representative of the Commission.

In the New EU Forest Strategy for 2030, the Commission took the view that 'the wider contribution of forests to the European Green Deal objectives, as presented in the Strategy, including for climate, biodiversity and sustainable bioeconomy,

necessitates a more inclusive and better coordinated EU forest governance structure.

Reinforced coordination of different policies should be ensured and a multidisciplinary exchange should be facilitated, with the involvement of a wide variety of experts and stakeholders.

As part of this new governance structure, the Commission proposes to amend Council Decision 89/367/EEC through a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes to amend Council Decision 89/367/EEC to rename the Standing Forestry Committee, and to extend its tasks.

In order to ensure a reinforced cooperation and multidisciplinary exchange between the Commission and the Member States on forests and the forestry sector in relation to all forest relevant Union policy areas, it is proposed to set up a **Standing Forest and Forestry Expert Group**.

In particular, the expert group's tasks will be:

- to assist the Commission in the preparation of legislative proposals, guidelines or other Union policy initiatives relevant to forests and forestry, including in the implementation of the New EU Forest Strategy for 2030 and subsequent Union Forest Strategies;
- to provide the Commission with advice and expertise, either on the initiative of the Commission or at the request of a Member State, with a view to supporting the wider contribution of forests and forestry to key Union objectives and initiatives, such as the European Green Deal, and to promoting coherence and synergies between Union policies relevant to forests and forestry;
- to promote cooperation between the Commission and the Member States on forests and forestry, including in support of measures and interventions under the common agricultural policy;
- to foster the exchange of knowledge, experience and good practices in the field of forests and forestry.

The proposed decision would also **clarify its membership** to ensure that the Member States' authorities that are competent for the different policy objectives of the New EU Forest Strategy for 2030, including climate, forest health, environment, forestry, rural development and bioeconomy, and any subsequent Union Forest Strategies, are part of this group.